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REMARKS

ON THE

SLAVERY OF THE BLACK PEOPLE ;

ADDRESSED

TO THE

CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES,

PARTICULARLY

TO THOSE WHO ARE IN LEGISLATIVE OR EXECUTIVE STATIONS  
IN THE GENERAL OR STATE GOVERNMENTS ;

AND ALSO

TO SUCH INDIVIDUALS AS HOLD THEM IN BONDAGE.

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BY JOHN PARRISH.

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## PREFACE.



BELIEVING in the inward manifestation of Divine Grace, I was, in early life, drawn to regard its instructions as a sure guide through this world, and as the means of preparation for a future and better state. The human mind, through the effectual operation of this blessed Principle, becoming redeemed from evil, its capacity for the reception of heavenly impressions is strengthened, and being united in love to its Almighty Benefactor, it expands in fervent desire for the prosperity and happiness of the rational creation, agreeably to the commandment recited by the apostle, "that he who loveth God, love his brother also." In a measure of this love, and under a sense of religious duty, I have been engaged thus to make known the exercise of my mind on a subject, which, I conceive, is deeply interesting to the common weal, and as nearly affecting the peace and comfort of individuals, as any that, for many years, has claimed public attention. I hope that none may suffer prejudice, or the bias of interest, to disqualify them for true judgment, or a due estimation of truths and facts; which, I trust, if impartially weighed, will carry conviction and excite a degree of commiseration and sympathy, for a class of mankind that have but few who are willing to acknowledge them as brethren, or cordially disposed to espouse their cause.

Possessing but little advantage from education, my style may appear very simple and inelegant, but having no view to popularity or the least degree of pecuniary emolument, my sole inducement being for the relief of a concerned mind that seeks the welfare of my country, I hope the essay will meet with a charitable construction, and that no offence may be taken at the plain, pointed terms, in which I have believed myself constrained to speak.

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## REMARKS ON SLAVERY, &c.

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*To the Inhabitants of the United States of America, more especially the Rulers, and such as hold Slaves.*

“When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” Isa. xxvi. 9.

ABOUT half a century past, the natives of this land were suffered to make inroads on its white inhabitants. They burnt towns, drove back armies, massacred many of the people on the frontiers, and took a number of captives; which occasioned many in this part of the continent to shudder, and their countenances to turn pale.

The society of Friends, the people called Quakers, although they had for many years repeatedly advised and cautioned their members against importing or purchasing Slaves, were renewedly led to inquire, “Is there not a cause?”—and the subject becoming increasingly impressive, about the year 1758 they were engaged in endeavouring to cleanse their hands from this pollution, and through patient perseverance, were favoured to be freed therefrom.

At the commencement of the war between Great-Britain and America, the people, sensible of the impending troubles and distress commonly attendant on such occasions, and clearly seeing that righte-

business alone is promotive of civil well-being, were drawn into a serious consideration of many subjects among us needing a reform, and some so prominent as to require immediate correction. Under this impression the representatives in Congress declared in 1774, Article II. "We will neither import nor purchase any Slaves imported after the first day of December next, after which time we will wholly discontinue the Slave-trade; and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures to those who are concerned in it."\*—Article VIII. "And will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments."

And in 1776 it appeared to be an established creed as stated in the Declaration of Independence,—"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that amongst these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The Bill of Rights, the Conventions in the different states, and the Constitution of the United States, all spake the same language.† Here the

\* Virginia and Maryland appear to have considered this of perpetual obligation by their Assemblies passing laws accordingly.

† See Appendix, A.



light was set upon the candlestick, that all who were in the house (the United States) might behold things in their proper colours. "Had I not have spoken unto you, ye would have had no sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sin," was the language of Christ to the Jews.

Suffer me to expostulate with you, O ye inhabitants of the land of my nativity! The enslaving our fellow-men, and selling them into cruel bondage, is a national evil, and will, I believe, most assuredly draw down national judgments. War, pestilence, and famine, are recorded in sacred writ to be such. One cloud is past over,\* under which many weeping widows and fatherless children were left to mourn the loss of the heads of their tribes; many great men of the earth were put to flight, and knew not where to find refuge; some retired to the mountains, or the woods, for a place of safety; and in the time of extremity they looked up to their slaves for protection; and though some for the sake of liberty made their escape, yet many were found faithful to the trust reposed in them; and not a few of the wealthy inhabitants became so reduced through various causes, that they and their families had scarcely sufficient for subsistence. Here was a time when famine threatened, notwithstanding the fruitfulness of our soil. The fly has been suffered to go through the fields of corn, to bring a blast and cause it to wither, so as to discourage the husbandman from sowing his fields as

\* Late war.

usual.—The worm and the wevil, like an army, have entered the stacks and barns, and rendered the grain in some places of little value. Our fruit-trees of latter years have been remarkably smitten, so that the product has been small, and not come to that perfection as formerly. The rain has been withheld, at seasons, in a remarkable manner, so that a shower has not been witnessed to moisten the earth for upwards of ninety days in some places. The water-courses and ponds have been dried up, and the wells have failed; insomuch that waggoners on the road have not been able to get a supply of water to quench the thirst of their dumb beasts; it may therefore be justly said now as in the days of the Lord's prophet Amos, chap. iv. one judgment or warning succeeded another, whereby the fruits of the earth were smitten and withered, in one place for lack of rain, and in others where it was more plentiful, there were blasting and mildew, the caterpillar and the palmer-worm devoured. Though these were evident tokens of Divine displeasure, there was cause for the complaint to be uttered, "Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord." Pestilence and the sword were also sent, so that the stink of their camps came up into their nostrils; "yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."—The call was extended still further, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!"—A pestilential disease has been repeated in our land, from one year to another, and many of the corpses of the deceased have become

so offensive as to render it necessary to commit them immediately to the grave; still it is to be feared that the same cause of complaint remains with too many, that they have not returned to the Lord; but contrarywise, have returned to their cruelties on the human species, to their dissipation, their sports and plays, and the many abominations, which, in the time of extremity, were reprobated and testified against,\* as offensive in the sight of Heaven. The same causes produce the same effects:—remove the cause, and the effect will cease —It is righteousness that exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. How do unrighteousness and dissipation abound! Late-ly, when the general Legislature was sitting to make laws for the good of the nation, a horse-race being set up in the vicinity of the seat of Government, and multitudes of people of different ranks from the highest to the lowest, flocking thither, this scene of wantonness and sinful pastime was with its concomitant evils countenanced and encouraged by those who should be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.

But above all things, *Slavery*, and the robbing men of their rights, appears to be one of the greatest enormities in the land. These things have pressed upon my spirit day and night for years past, and I believe it right to caution and warn such as are concerned therein.

\* See Declaration of Congress.

The cruelties inflicted on the poor Africans and their descendants, may, probably have more deeply affected my mind than many others, from the early impressions which were made in my minority, more than sixty years past, and which have continued down to the present time with increasing weight. Some of these cruelties came immediately under my notice, and others I received from the undoubted authority of respectable persons, as well as from publications of pamphlets and newspapers which have fallen into my hands. I remember, when a young man, being in the lower part of Maryland, I saw a mulatto female stripped and tied to a horse-rack, where she received many stripes on her bare back, by the hand of a cruel, hard-hearted overseer, with a hickory-stick; every stroke bruised and mangled the flesh of the tortured victim, whose cries were enough to affect the most obdurate heart,—yet with all my entreaty I could not prevail on the deputy to desist and let her down; and notwithstanding I exposed myself to the censure of both man and master, which I did not escape, I was induced, from her bitter cries, to interfere, and let her down. Instances of this sort, as well as multitudes of others towards this unhappy race of our fellow-creatures, some of which will be mentioned in the course of this work, have so deeply affected my mind, that I believe it to be a duty at this my advanced time of life to appear on behalf of, and to “open my mouth for the dumb, and such as are “appointed to destruction.”

I believe it is right that the axe should be laid to the root of this corrupt tree. I trust I am no man's enemy, and desire to give no just occasion to have any ; and if I had it in my power to do a kindness to a member of any of the different legislatures, or to a private individual, who remains in the practice of holding their fellow-mortals in bondage, I should be willing to serve them. Far be it from me to call for fire to come down from heaven, to destroy those who are withholding justice....the common right of men. That I must leave....the judge stands at the door. "Judgment is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it." My concern is to relieve a pained mind, which hath been deeply exercised on account of those captives, who are groaning under hard task-masters ; and am also engaged that their masters, by pursuing a conduct different from the general practice, may experience peace and happiness, gaining the affections of their servants by a fatherly christian care over them. For I am comforted in an unshaken belief, that the Most High, who sustains the character of Almighty, has heard the groans of this oppressed part of mankind, and will arise for their deliverance : Such as observe the signs of the times, may see, he has already arisen, the work doth progressively advance, and I believe, that all the combinations of human policy shall not be able to prevent the deliverance of this people from their wretched state of thralldom.

Seeing these poor people are seized and fettered in irons, and sold into unconditional bondage into the Southern Governments (which is and has been much practised within the United States) there to linger out the remainder of their wretched lives, and have no helper from any authority ; surely they have just cause to complain, and look up to government and those in power for redress of grievances : And let it be remembered that they never forfeited life or liberty, and were, by the predecessors of those now in office, virtually proclaimed free.

I am no politician, but it is clear that the fundamentals of all good governments, being equal liberty and impartial justice, the constitution and laws ought to be expressed in such unequivocal terms as not to be misunderstood, or admit of a double meaning.

The preamble to the constitution is plain ; “ We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity, do ordain and establish.” &c. Any expressions in such an instrument calculated to admit of partial construction or different meaning, in order to enslave a particular race of men, after having proclaimed “ that all have an unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” would be ignoble, and below the dignity of men qualified to fill such important stations. If it were

not meant as is declared, to form a more perfect union, it must have a contrary effect, and instead of securing domestic tranquillity, it will consequently tend to promote insurrection, and lay waste the strength of the government, by depriving the coloured people of those rights, which had just before been pronounced, and held up to their view; as a member of congress declared, when these people petitioned for a redress of grievances, that every one in that predicament, of which there were so many hundred thousands, laid waste the Nations' strength, &c. And nothing can be more contrary to the blessing of liberty, than to make them liable to unconditional bondage, without the consoling prospect of ever being redeemed therefrom.

A house divided against itself cannot stand; neither can a government or constitution: this is coincident with the present chief Magistrate's opinion in his Notes on the State of Virginia, page 173.

"With what execration shall the statesman be loaded, that suffers one half of the citizens to trample on the rights of the other; and can the liberty of a nation be thought secure, when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God, that they are not to be violated, but with his wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country, when I reflect that God is just....and that his justice cannot sleep for ever....Considering numbers,

nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situations is among possible events : that it may become probable by supernatural interference ; the Almighty has no attribute that can take sides with us in such a contest.”

There is a species of the Slave-trade carried on in the United States, which, in cruelty, equals that to Africa. A class of men whose minds seem to have become almost callous to every tender feeling, having agents in various places, suited to their purpose, travel through different states, and by purchase, or otherwise, procure considerable numbers of this people, which consequently occasions a separation of the nearest connections in life, husbands from wives, and parents from children, the poignant sensations marked on their mournful countenances being disregarded, they are taken in droves through the country, like herds of cattle, but with less commiseration ; for, being chained or otherwise fettered, the weight and friction of their shackles naturally producing much soreness and pain, they are greatly incommoded in their travel. Jails, designed for the security of such as have forfeited their liberty by a breach of the laws, are, through the countenance of some in the magistracy, made receptacles for this kind of merchandize ; and when opportunity presents for moving them further, it is generally in the dead of night, that their cries might not be heard, nor legal measures pursued to restore to their rights, such as have been



kidnapped; others are chained in the garrets or cellars of private houses, till the number becoming nearly equal to the success which may have been expected, they are then conveyed on board, and crowded under the hatches of vessels secretly stationed for the purpose, and thus transported to Petersburg in Virginia, or such other parts as will insure the best market, and many others are marched by land to unknown destined places.

Is it not a melancholy circumstance that such an abominable trade should be suffered in a land boasting of liberty? While I was waiting, with other friends, on the Legislature of Maryland at their session in 1803, it was well known that a vessel lay in the river below Baltimore to take in slaves, a practice frequent on the waters of Maryland, Delaware, and some other places. On the presentation of Friends' Memorial, a committee being appointed, reported two resolves:—One, that it was reasonable an act should pass to prevent husband being separated from wife, and parents from children under ten years of age; the other to prevent persons set free, at a given time, by will or otherwise, from being sold and carried out of the state; but neither of these objects could be obtained. These flagrant violations of the rights of humanity were set forth in a humble manner by the free people of colour in their petition (before-mentioned) to Congress at their last session held in Philadelphia, on behalf of their suffer-

ing brethren in captivity.\* So that in many of these grievous cases no redress is granted the suppliants of the coloured people, nor to others applying on their behalf, either from the General Government, or those of the different states. What will posterity think of such abuse of power entrusted to rulers for the benefit, protection, and general good of the people? Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth! who is a refuge for the oppressed, and will in his own time plead their cause.

The Congress, professing such implicit regard to the Constitution as to decline any interference in relieving this abject class of the human species, could with much readiness enact the Fugitive Bill which authorizes a slave-holder or his deputy to go through every State in the Union, even where slavery is not tolerated; and by the evidence of one man, taken before a single magistrate (and he perhaps interested in the business) bring back the poor fugitive, who, after enduring stripes and other cruel treatment, may be sold to the southern traders, generally known by the name of Georgia men.

In the sacred scripture it is written that there shall be one law for the native and the stranger—one rule of justice—Lev. xxiv. 22. “Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one

\* For this Petition, see Appendix, B.

of your own country : for I am the Lord your God.” Which is in direct opposition to the law of Congress, and many of the laws in different states. A law was enacted in Maryland to make the oath of a slave valid against a free black, whereupon, a slave, by the influence of his master or others, might be induced to swear falsely, either to curry favour, or through prejudice to an individual, so that an honest free black may be put in prison, sold out for his fees to a southern trader, and be made a slave for term of life. This law was passed at the same session, when the Assembly would not afford them any relief in regard to the cruelties before mentioned ; but they were at no loss to know how to oppress them.

A distressing case soon took place :—“ A man near the Bald-friar ferry in that state, who was prejudiced against one David M’Kim, a mulatto man, brought forward a black lad, a slave, to swear that M’Kim had persuaded him to poison the family ; in consequence the mulatto man was committed to jail in irons, where he lay, by the account I received, from the 5th of the 6th month until the 7th of the 8th month ; when the boy was brought to substantiate the charges ; but here truth prevailed ; although his dreaded master was along side of him, he could not be induced to perjure himself, and declared it was not true ; and that his master by threats had compelled him to swear falsely. The poor man of course was liberated ; but says, the confinement has ruined him ; that he has been persecuted and pro-

secuted." "Thus," says the writer of the account, "has perjury and subornation of perjury been resorted to, to injure him, without cause, and without reason;—and though they uniformly failed to destroy him totally, yet they have succeeded in reducing him to that situation, which would have entitled him to the commiseration of the humane, but alas! he is not a white man."

What kind of government must this be to admit of no remedy for such an enormous evil, towards a people, that, in fact, had been declared free, and had an unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Is it not to be feared that for want of impartial justice, its foundation is unsound, and consequently cannot be permanent.—  
 "Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you:"—this is not only obligatory on us as individuals in our relation to each other, but remains to be the only sure basis of all good government; for want of which, some governments have been crushed to pieces, and multitudes have lost their lives in the ruins.

But to return:—The evidence of a free African or his descendants, will not, in Maryland, and some other states, be taken against a white man; although, as a rogue, he may thereby go unpunished; and, in fact, many do so go unpunished.

Many of the people of colour, who had fled to prevent their being sold to southern traders, have, by the authority of the fugitive law, been pursued, brought back, and sold to men of this description;

and as Government had refused to afford them any redress, to God only could they look for support. Thus this law is put in force against an unoffending helpless people, while of the fugitive for murder or theft, little or no notice is taken in some places.— So that the true spirit of judgment is turned backward. And as it is manifest that Congress supposed they had a right to make laws to oppress this description of the great family of mankind, which is apparent by the aforesaid law ; I apprehend there can be no doubt of their authority, if not in other places, at least in the district of Columbia, to prevent some of those evils this degraded part of our fellow-men are groaning under. And where could it begin better than at the seat of Government ?

In some places, cognizance of murder is taken long after the perpetration. In the Court of King's Bench, in Great-Britain, the Governor of Goree, in Africa, for ordering a serjeant to be illegally whipped, which occasioned his death, was tried and executed, fifteen or twenty years afterwards. How have the coloured peoples' lives been sported with in some parts of the United States ! Numbers have been whipped to death, and otherwise murdered, and little or no notice taken in a judicial capacity. It was reported from good authority, that a black man who was sold from near Snow-Hill, in Maryland, to a distant part of the continent, returned back and lay out of doors ; being accused of stealing from the neighbours, was pursued, taken, and brought into the village one morn-

ing, and there hung without judge or jury; of which no more notice was taken than if they had hung a dog. Great are the oppressions and cruelties still continued towards multitudes of this people who are kept in bondage, which are so notorious that little need be said on the occasion; yet it may not be improper to recite some few cases.

It was a just observation of Thomas Jefferson, "that the whole commerce between master and slave is one perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions on the one part; and degrading submission on the other." Many instances have occurred, and some of a recent date, where the slaves have rather chosen death, than to remain in a state of bondage, liable to be separated from all that is dear to them. Some have plunged into the water, and drowned themselves; others have cut their throats, as one man in Delaware county jail; another, on the pavement in Philadelphia, while the stage was waiting to take him off, it appearing by the public prints that a magistrate in Trenton had signed an order that he might be sent as a slave to the West-Indies. Others, in attempting to make their escape, have resorted to desperate means for effecting it. A number of this unhappy people were taken from the eastern shore of Maryland, by two of the southern traders, called Georgia men, Henry Spieres and Joshua Butts, who being concerned with the Treasurer of the state of Georgia, he furnished them out of the Treasury with eight or ten thousand dollars, to speculate on, but as they

were returning with their booty, through Southampton county, in Virginia, they were exterminated by their prisoners; who were afterwards apprehended, and several of them executed. A piece appeared in Poulson's paper, signed by Thomas Rowan, giving an account that on the 27th of October, 1803, as James Howard and himself were going down the Ohio, with a company of this kind of merchandize, bound to the Natchez; he says, "Unfortunately, some of the negro men meditated the sanguinary intention of killing us, as we were laying asleep; and accordingly attempted to carry their object into execution; one of them with an axe, and another with a loaded whip, terminated the life of the said Mr. Howard. I fortunately got overboard, received a stroke on my wrist, and swam ashore. The fellows were all caught, and committed to the jail of Canawaha county, two of whom have received sentence of death,....the others have been ordered to be hired out, and will be detained, until the friends of Mr. Howard come forward." And he adds, "As the conveyance of letters is uncertain, he deemed it most expedient to convey the melancholy intelligence through the medium of the newspapers." The human mind in its natural state is in all men subject to the like passions, and where grievous oppression exists, violent efforts for relief are excited: thus this horrid commerce is pregnant with the most dreadful circumstances, and when we consider that it is but little discouraged by the Government, our minds

are shocked at the painful reflection that distress and misery should be thus continued to the human species. What can be the feelings of those who carry on this trade, both buyers and sellers, particularly those in office, who, holding the reins of government, should be "a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well?" Is it not lamentable that a commerce which is productive of such multiplied enormities should be permitted among a people professing faith in Christ?

It appears to those who are free from prejudice, that the sufferings of the blacks in some parts of the United States, have been as cruel as in any other part of the world, which is confirmed by the many barbarities under the acts of outlawry in the southern states; some have been hunted with dogs, some wounded, and others killed.....When I was travelling through North Carolina, a black man who was outlawed, being shot by one of his pursuers and left wounded in the woods, they came to an ordinary where I had stopped to feed my horse, in order to procure a cart to bring the poor wretched object in. Another, I was credibly informed, was shot, his head cut off, and carried in a bag by the perpetrators of the murder, who received the reward, which was said to be two hundred dollars, continental currency, and that his head was stuck on a coal-house at an iron-works in Virginia; and this for going to visit his wife at a distance.\* Crawford gives an account of a man being gibbeted

\* See Appendix, C.



alive in South Carolina, and the buzzards came and picked out his eyes. Another was burnt to death at a stake in Charleston, surrounded by a multitude of spectators, some of whom were people of the first rank ;....the poor object was heard to cry as long as he could breathe, “ not guilty, not guilty.”....One judge on the Eastern Shore of Maryland sold thirteen of his slaves to a southern trader, among whom was a woman whose husband was sent to gather oysters while the wife was taken away ; when he returned and found his wife was gone, he expostulated with his master, querying, “ Whether he had not been a faithful servant for upwards of twenty years ?” and requested he might be sold to go after his wife, but was refused. A man by the name of Black, in Cedar-creek Neck, about the latter end of the 4th month, 1805, in the state of Delaware and county of Sussex, suspending a black lad, and tying three fence rails to his feet, by severe beating put an end to his existence ; and afterwards had him buried in the night. On discovery of the fact, the corpse was taken up, and by the coroner’s inquest, he was found guilty of murder. And it further appeared that he had been the death of two such unhappy victims before, which were secreted, and what makes it the more lamentable, the lad, it appeared, was innocent of the crime he was charged with, which was taking leather for a pair of shoe soles, which Black’s son afterwards acknowledged, he had taken ; Black made his escape, and a reward was offered for his

being taken up, so that he might be brought to trial.

From a recent account published in the American Daily Advertiser, by a person who had taken a tour along the Eastern Shore of Maryland, it appears, that from that side of the Bay only, there were not less than six hundred blacks carried off in six months, by the Georgia men, or southern traders. In the state of Maryland, there is the greatest market, or inland trade in the human species of any part of the United States. Some of the agents for those southern traders are so hardy as to publish by advertisement their readiness to procure this kind of cargo, which they effect in various ways; frequently by purchases, made so secretly, that the poor blacks, when perhaps engaged at their meals, or occupied in some domestic concerns, not having the least intimation of the design, are suddenly seized, bound, and carried off, either to some place provided for the purpose, or immediately on board the vessels: and many others are obtained by kidnapping, until the whole supply is completed. A man of the name of Swan, in Easton, who was concerned in this nefarious business, was detected and sent to jail, and on searching his house, two children were found secreted in an upper room: he used to keep these poor objects locked and chained, until his colleagues came and took them away, some by land, and others by water; such as passed through Baltimore frequently had their number enlarged out of

the jail, where (by countenance of men in authority, as before observed) they were lodged till such time as they could be conveyed away. These men-stealers, though far worse than high-way robbers, are seldom made to suffer what a due administration of the law would justly inflict:...one of them being spoken to on account of his engaging in this horrid traffic, confessed, that "if he were to give conscience fair play, he should not do it." I have heard some men, in eminent stations say, "the country must be thinned of these people, they must be got rid of at any rate. Some from embarrassed circumstances, have made sale of those wretched objects, who being fallen upon at unawares, handcuffed, and sent off, has struck such terror in other slaves, who would otherwise have remained with their masters, that they have taken flight in order to an escape; a man and his wife on the Eastern Shore of Maryland being thus circumstanced, fled, and under such alarm, it was said she had even left her sucking child. After they were taken, I met with them, coupled together in irons, and drove along the road like brute beasts, by two rough unfeeling men. About sixty of these poor men, women, &c. were lately driven through Pennsylvania, and not only the males, but the females were so iron bound, that it was with great difficulty the latter could clothe and feed their children.

Two persons who were travelling through the southern states in the autumn of 1803, as they passed through North Carolina, stopt at Charlotte-

ville, and put up at the widow Mason's ordinary, where they saw a coffin making; and on inquiry it appeared that the widow's son, after threatening a black man, threw a stone and broke his skull, which in a few days occasioned his death, his weeping widow and several children being left to deplore his loss: but as he was black, it seemed as though little notice would be taken of it. This youth appears to have been such an one as is described in Jefferson's Notes, who had "caught lineaments of wrath, and had given a loose to his worst of passions; and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, could not but be stamped with odious peculiarities." As these travellers were passing through Virginia, near Amherst court-house, they were informed by a black woman, with tears in her eyes, that a beloved brother, about two weeks before, had been so barbarously whipped by an overseer, that he died two days after correction.

I cannot but remember my feelings when laying in Carlisle Bay, at Barbadoes, in 1784, on seeing a Guinea-ship whose decks were covered with slaves; the grown persons on the main deck, and the younger ones on the quarter, which was enough to make a feeling heart shudder; and I was ready to exclaim, How could I possibly bear to see one of my children in this situation? And yet in this land of boasted liberty, there are numerous instances of masters selling and separating the nearest connections, as before hinted. When I was in

Maryland, one who professed himself to be a minister of the gospel, sold some children from their parents, never likely to meet again while in time.

It has been asked, What can be said in favour of emancipation, when so many that are free are crowded into jail for their dishonesty, &c. ? I am not disposed to countenance wrong things, but they may plead the examples of the whites....

“ That disposition to theft which they have been branded with, must be ascribed to their situation, and not to any depravity of the moral sense. The man in whose favour no laws of property exist, probably feels himself less bound to respect those made in favour of others. When arguing for ourselves, we lay it down as a fundamental, that ‘ laws to be just, must give a reciprocation of right’.... that without this, they are mere arbitrary rules of conduct, founded in force, and not in conscience : and it is a problem which I give to the master to solve, whether the religious precepts against the violation of property, were not framed for him as well as his slave ; and whether the slave may not as justifiably take a little from one who has taken all from him, as he may slay one who would slay him ; that a change in relation, in which a man is placed, should change his ideas of moral right or wrong, is neither new nor peculiar to the colour of the blacks. Homer tells us it was so upwards of two thousand six hundred years ago....

“ Jove fix’d it certain, that whatever day  
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.”

JEFFERSON’S NOTES, PAGE 153.

It is necessary to make great allowances for the poor blacks, considering their education and condition. It may, therefore, well be accounted for, why the Indians' mental capacities appear stronger than theirs. The Indians have never had their spirits broken down by hard labour and oppression as the injured Africans, under severe task-masters ; so that it may be justly concluded, the great Author of mans' existence is as liberal in bestowing talents on them as those of other nations. Many instances might be adduced in support of this conclusion.

I am happy to have it to mention that there is now an increasing care extended for a guarded education of the coloured people, and to the credit of many of the humane and benevolent citizens of Philadelphia, there are no less than eight or ten schools kept up in the city for the instruction of this class of mankind, where there is upwards of five hundred instructed daily; which bids fair to qualify and fit many of them to become as useful members of the community as those of a different complexion, who now unjustly hold them in captivity, and claim them as property. And however this claim might have been allowable, in the days of our forefathers, which may be said to have been a time of ignorance, and therefore winked at ; such who believe that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep for ever, can have no solid grounds to hope for the long continuance of his blessing on a government which neglects or refuses its duty in respect to these people.

Would it not be of more importance to devise means for the removal of a national evil, of so much magnitude, and on which the welfare of the United States so much depends, than the acquisition of unbounded territory? Perhaps some who have been accustomed to live in pride, idleness, and luxury, may plead necessity on account of the climate not suiting their constitutions; but a thing radically wrong, will not admit of such fig-leaf coverings. My object is the good of my countrymen, as well the master, as the slave. I am no partizan; and they who know me best will subscribe to the truth of this assertion. I do most assuredly believe, that the withholding from this oppressed part of the community their just rights, without suitable provision being made for their redemption, will draw down Divine displeasure. I hope no one will take offence at my plain manner of treating the subject;....it has been weightily upon my mind for a series of years: and when we look round and behold the state of things, both in Europe and America, it evidently appears, that the judgments of the Most High are in the earth;....may the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness! War, pestilence, and famine, have been experienced in many places. The Britons and the French, with other European nations are in great agitation and tumult; and it would be wisdom to consider that trouble does not spring out of the ground, neither does the Almighty afflict his people willingly: most, if not all, of these nations, have been engaged in this most

iniquitous commerce; and more fully to accomplish their designs, have furnished the people of Africa, of different nations, with arms and ammunition, to wage war with each other, to captivate and make prisoners of their own brethren, to procure cargoes of slaves for the high professors of the Christian religion. It is an unchangeable truth, as it is meted out to others, it is, or will be, meted back again. In the course of the American revolution, this was fulfilled to a tittle. Britons and Americans, heretofore united in ravaging the coast of Africa, were then engaged in killing each other, crowding their captives into jails and prison-ships, so as to bring many into cruel sufferings, and to an untimely death. They carried the matter so far, to the southward in the United States, as to buy and sell each other, such was the enmity that took place between those denominated whig and tory. When they were about to make up their companies for actual service, it was said that some who endeavoured to keep out of the way, were taken and sold to make up deficiencies. Some who were accounted inimical to the cause being forced into ~~the army~~<sup>exile</sup>, were brought from South Carolina, by the way of Lancaster, to Philadelphia, where I saw them bemoaning their situation;... some of the representatives from that state in Congress kindly interfering, they were suffered to return home.

If an Israelite's servant would not leave his master's service, his ear was to be bored through,



and he might be retained in bondage. And it is now said by some of our slave-holders, " My negroes will not leave me : " let such remain ; but treat them as fellow-men providentially placed under your care ; and shew yourselves faithful guardians by giving them a Christian education, and providing them with a sufficiency of the comforts of life ; then the master and the servant may be mutually helpful to each other. I believe that now, as formerly, there are to be servants as well as masters, but, alas ! how contrary to such Christian treatment, is the conduct of multitudes of slaveholders ! They allow them but one peck of meal for a whole week, in some of the southern states..... How despotically are they ruled !....Instead of receiving kind and gentle treatment, they are subjected to cruelty and oppression, by masters, mistresses, and hard-hearted overseers. It is shocking to the feelings of humanity, in travelling through some of those states, to see these poor objects, especially in the inclement season, in rags, and trembling with the cold ; yet some of these taskmasters will say, they treat their slaves well : custom may have reconciled it to them, but it strikes the feeling minds of strangers with astonishment and disgust. A chief of the Seneca Indians, who had been at the seat of Government, and beheld the oppression these people laboured under, afterwards inquired whether the Quakers kept slaves ; on being informed they did not, he expressed great satisfaction : mentioned he had been at the city of Washington, and found many white people kept

blacks in slavery, and used them no better than horses. That pious man, Richard Baxter, treating on the subject, says, that "it is enough to make the heathen hate christianity," which was verified by a late well-authenticated fact: Several missionaries being sent out professedly to propagate the gospel among the Aborigines of the wilderness, on informing them of their mission, the Indians held council for upwards of ten days; and at length advised them to return home....that the white people made slaves of the black people, and if they had it in their power, they would make slaves of the Indians; they therefore wanted no such religion.

From whence come wars and fightings? From lust: From whence comes slavery? From pride and avarice, links of the same chain. Where slavery abounds, tyranny, irreligion, and dissipation superabound; as appears by the account of the horse-racing, &c. near the seat of Government, already noticed. A similar exhibition of horse-racing, swearing, drunkenness, gambling, &c. was kept up at Fredericksburgh, in Virginia, by a large concourse of persons for several days; and many other places have exhibitions of the like kind. How will such feel, at their closing moments, when they come to reflect on their woeful waste of precious time; and that their follies were supported in a great measure, by the labour and toil of their poor oppressed slaves. It appears that those things were formerly declared to be of-

fensive in the sight of Heaven. Jer. xxii. 13. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work." Yet some of those plead scripture for slave-holding: it is to be hoped they will pay some regard to those passages which forbid injustice and oppression. How have thousands and tens of thousands of these people's lives been worn out, and wasted, and for what purpose? To support pride and idleness, which still continues; and which has already terminated in the ruin of multitudes of the offspring of these oppressors; agreeably to sacred writ.... "Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because of their tongues and their doings." Behold, where this abominable iniquity abounds, what cursing, swearing, and taking the sacred name in vain! Even the lands are left barren. It is mournful to behold, in riding along in some places, the soil worn out, the timber destroyed, the fences broken down, the orchards in a manner become fruitless, the houses shattered and ready to fall to pieces, for a considerable extent of country, the poor brute languishing for want of food, and shelter from the storm. So that it may be justly said now as formerly, that the land is made barren, by the wickedness of those that dwell therein; Psal. cvii. 34. I am not insensible of my exposure to the censure of those that shut their eyes that they will not see, and stop their ears that they will not hear, &c. lest they should be convert-

ed : but I appeal to the more serious and considerate, if these things are not so.

The Constitution of the United States is the fundamental law ; the principles of which ought to pervade the whole system of legal operation. The leading features of the Constitution are set forth in the Declaration of Congress, July 4th, 1776, as before noticed....“ We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” &c. and in the Constitutions of the several states are paragraphs nearly similar. Let it then be remembered how emphatically the prophet reminds the Israelites of their covenant, and the awful denunciation of Divine judgment, on account of their not keeping it, Jer. xxxiv. 10. “ Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his man servant, and every one his maid servant go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more, then they obeyed and let them go. But afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection, for servants and for handmaids. Therefore the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, from the Lord, saying, Ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty, every man to his neighbour : but ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant and his handmaid to return, and brought them into subjection, &c.\*

\* See Appendix, D.

Therefore thus saith the Lord, ye have not hearkened unto me....Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine." It may not be improper to revive the statutes given by the Almighty to the Israelites, Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.

May the Congress, the grand inquest of the United States, exert every nerve to extend the blessings of liberty to people of all descriptions and complexions; and may the state legislatures do the same. I call upon the executive departments of Government, to protect all kinds of people in their natural and civil rights....and all those who hold slaves, to consider what right they have to keep them in slavery. Sure I am, there is no just law to support it; it is against the essence of the Constitution, and very contrary to the nature and spirit of christianity.

It was praise-worthy in the General Legislature to pass a law prohibiting our citizens supplying foreign nations with slaves from Africa: but it remains to be lamented that a wide door continues open for carrying on the internal trade, before noticed, which I apprehend might be stopped by the different legislatures passing laws prohibiting the transportation of this people through their respective states, which is still the case, particularly to the southward. Which the rulers in those parts will do well to consider, lest their country being filled with slaves, may be a means of filling

their cup with iniquity; and their destruction come upon them like an armed man.

The 6th Article of the Constitution says, "All debts contracted and engagements entered into before the adoption of the Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation;" and by the declaration of the Confederation, on a fair construction, the people of colour are declared to be free; and although the 11th section of the Constitution says, "No person held to service or labour in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on the claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due." Yet can any labour or service be due from a person deprived of his natural right? especially when he has arrived to man's estate, and "has reaped down the fields of his claimer without wages, which is by him kept back by fraud," as set forth by the apostle James.

Can there be any greater inconsistency or absurdity, after the declaration, that "all men have an unalienable right to liberty, &c." than that such an unjust construction should be put upon the aforesaid section, as is done by the fugitive law? when in justice there is a balance in favour of the poor fugitive who has escaped. There being no expression respecting the colour of the skin, was it not evident by the ambiguous terms used, that

such incompatibility with the repeated avowal of the natural rights of men would strike every observer as a direct violation of the principle on which the whole is founded? Will not the cries of this deeply afflicted people reach the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth, O ye men who set up a claim to a fellow-mortal? What will it do for you in the day of retribution, when the servant shall be free from his master; and both shall appear before an impartial Judge, who is no respecter of persons?

Is it not astonishing that after so many applications to the different state legislatures, as well as to Congress, so little should be done in favour of this people, who are held in captivity contrary to every principle of justice and equity? Call to remembrance, I entreat you, O ye men in office! the many changes and revolutions which have taken place in times past, and which were very much out of view till they came to the threshold of the door. Remember how it fared with Oliver Cromwell, who, after he had risen to be Lord Protector, and had got the government, as he thought, established, who had declared that if he did not support liberty, even that liberty which had occasioned many to leave the land of their nativity, and seek an asylum in a vast howling wilderness, to enjoy the inestimable blessing of liberty of conscience (to be deprived of which, or the liberty of the body, is a reproach to the rulers of any country) he would sooner be willing to be rolled into his grave and buried with infamy, than give his consent to the

throwing away of that government, so testified unto in the fundamentals of it. What can have been more strongly testified of, than liberty to all men by the rulers of the United States? How did it resound from one end of the continent to the other? See how it fared with Cromwell after he had warped from justice and true judgment;....what he had imprecated upon himself, was, in effect, fulfilled.

Many instances might be recited out of history, both sacred and profane, to shew how many, who filled the most dignified stations in life, were let down, even into disgrace, when they departed from justice and true judgment, so as to forget the day of covenant-making; which it is to be feared is the case with many in our land in the present day. How has the conduct of the people in many places contradicted their professions in that humiliating season when every species of dissipation was condemned and reprobated: but behold them returning, like the swine to wallowing in the filth of pollution; the same wicked practices, which, in that day were declared against, have since been aggravated by a rapid increase, to the great grief of many of the sober inhabitants of the different religious denominations in the United States.

As the agitated state of Europe has been before touched on, it may not be improper again to advert thereto. In England, several persons of rank and eminent talents exerting their pens in advocating the cause of humanity, the feelings of the people in various parts were so affected, that upwards of five hun-



dred petitions were presented to the Parliament for suppression of the African Slave-trade ; but from mistaken policy they declined complying with this reasonable request, so obviously founded upon the principles and doctrines of Christianity, and lest it should diminish the revenue, chose rather to continue a commerce that disgraces the Government with lasting infamy. Whenever individuals or a people pursue that which is clearly manifest to be evil, the fruit is bitter indeed. It is remarkable, that the troubles and difficulties which have come upon that country have been almost unremitted : war, with its train of miseries and woes has for many years prevailed, and the nation plunged into perplexity and vast expense : being accounted the most powerful by sea, if not by land, she has taken the lead of all others in enslaving the poor Africans that never injured her. But is not her present situation lamentable ? May she not be addressed in the language of the prophet to a great people formerly, “ The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked ; the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet ; the Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him ; ” .... mark what follows : .... “ Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea ? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite ; Put and

Lubim were thy helpers, yet she was carried away, she went into captivity.” Read also the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel, of the judgments denounced against the Prince of Tyrus; that which was written aforetime was for the instruction, caution, and warning of future generations, and I am concerned to revive them, that others’ harms may be a warning.

Let the Government of the United States profit by the awful examples which are held up to our view;....here the spark of liberty hath kindled and glowed, its fervour hath in pathetic language been spread from the east to the westernmost parts of her borders,\* and though at present many may fondly indulge themselves with pleasing prospects that she shall sit as a queen, and see no sorrow, yet trouble, which springs not out of the ground, may soon overtake us. Upwards of seven hundred thousand of this people remain among us in unconditional bondage: this indescribable iniquity, with many others that are of less magnitude, may with propriety awaken our apprehensions, that the Divine displeasure will be certainly manifested for our correction in chastisements, heavier than we have hitherto experienced. Though it may be said the time is short till the year 1808, when more full justice may be done this people, remember that the delay of justice is injustice. As great men are sometimes suddenly removed, and others put in their places, those who are at present in conspicuous

\* See Appendix.

stations, if they neglect the work of their day, may not in that period have it in their power to effect it.

How was it in the case of the great king Belshazzar? Being well acquainted with the solemn events of the preceding reign, the prophet tells him, "Thou hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knowest all this; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." At an unexpected hour he was alarmed by the hand-writing on the plaster of the wall; and was informed that he was weighed in the balance, and found wanting: and I verily believe the like inscription will be written on the table of the hearts of some in authority, to their astonishment, if they continue to depart from their covenants, and sport themselves with their own deceivings; notwithstanding they may be glossed over, and covered with the soft but false appellation of innocent amusements. Call nothing innocent that the controversy of Heaven is against; which was considered to be the case with vain pastimes, when the covenant, before hinted at, was signed, sealed, and confirmed, by the voice of the people of the United States. Is there not reason to believe, that the language uttered by the apostle James is applicable in the present day, who, as a faithful watchman, exclaims, by way of warning, "Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of

Sabbaoth; ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton, ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you." Let me, my countrymen, once more request you to observe the signs of the times, which are gloomy. If I am not mistaken, a dark cloud now hangs over this nation, which, I believe, nothing short of what removed the impending judgment which awaited the inhabitants of Nineveh, will avert. There the judgment was removed by repentance; and because there were so many score thousands of the inhabitants which knew not their right-hand from their left, besides much cattle. O the boundless condescension of the Creator of the ends of the earth! We see in times of calamity how the brute creation suffers, which drew the compassion of the Almighty toward not only man, but beast, which are made to suffer in times of distress, whether it be by war, pestilence, or famine. Surely these things are not cunningly devised fables:.... there is a cloud of witnesses to the truth of the dealings of an over-ruling Providence, both of his judgments and mercies: he is long-suffering, and waits to be gracious; he will not condemn the innocent, neither acquit the guilty, without sincere repentance and amendment of life. We see that many are the abominations which draw down Divine displeasure, and bring judgments on lands and on individuals, but nothing appears to me equal, nor fraught with so many evils, as enslaving our fellow-men.

It has been some consolation to the feeling mind that every state in the Union had past laws to prevent the importation of slaves from abroad ; but of late South Carolina has opened her ports for their admittance, and thousands have been landed there in one year ; which appears to have been marked with the displeasure of the Most High, if floods, storms, and tempests, the loss of men's lives, of shipping, crops of corn, cotton, stock, and other property to an immense amount, so that man and beast are reduced for want of sustenance, may be called judgments. Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, after he had assented, till one judgment was sent after another, and by an out-stretched arm they were at length delivered. Congress may, after the year 1808, pass laws to prohibit importation or migration, but is it expected they will then be vested with more authority than they now have to redress the grievances of those already imported ?

It seems as though it were permitted for opening the eyes of this nation, that so large a number of its inhabitants should be taken and carried into bondage, and placed in a like situation, separated from their most endeared connections ; which appears more allowable in a people accounted barbarians, than in a nation professing the sacred name of Christ : and let it be remembered they come not on the American coasts to make slaves, as many of our citizens go upon that of Africa, for that nefarious purpose, and bring them here by force against their will, to the reproach of a free and enlightened people.

If so large a sum of money has been thought necessary to redeem our American brethren from the captivity of the Tripolitans, is it not expedient that a sum should be raised toward the colonization of the African race, who are held in captivity at home in the United States.\* “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he causeth even his enemies to be at peace with him, and he can also turn the hearts of the rebellious to the wisdom of the just.” The signs of the times are serious; so that it may be justly said, the Lord’s voice is heard in both city and country; and O that men would be wise, and “hear the rod, and him who hath appointed it.”

About the beginning of the war between Great Britain and America, as before hinted, the rights of men were investigated; till then it seemed more tolerable to hold the Africans in bondage; and notwithstanding the proclamation then went forth that all men have an unalienable right to liberty, yet this unoffending people are still kept in slavery, without the necessary provisions being made to break the yoke of oppression, by fixing some period, after which there should be no more slaves born in the United States. On this desirable object the happiness of this people, and the safety and welfare of this country, I believe, very much depends; and notwithstanding this is so, yet the many applications of the humane and lovers of their

\* Would not a measure of this sort make them friends instead of enemies?

country, have been rejected, or had but partial success.

Though this very important subject remains much unattended to, and is often treated with indifference, yet it is the generally received opinion, that the day is hastening when this people will become free; and it is desirable it should be with the consent of those who have authority over them.

It has been frequently asked, "How can the United States get rid of slavery?" This is an important question. The immediate liberation of all the slaves, may be attended with some difficulty; but surely something towards it may now be done. In the first place, let the President's plan, inserted in his Notes on Virginia be adopted, fixing a period after which none should be born slaves in the United States; and the coloured children to be free at a certain age.

This would tend to quiet the minds of the aged, affording the consoling prospect that their offspring in a future day will enjoy the blessings of liberty; and let no legal barrier remain to prevent individuals freeing their slaves at pleasure; and thus, in due time, a gradual emancipation would take place, and be fully completed.

The Spanish mode for the gradual abolition of slavery, is praise-worthy. They are registered in a book provided for the purpose, and one day in each week allowed them as their own: when they have earned a stipulated sum, another day in the

week is added ; thus going on, they have opportunity of acquiring as much as will purchase their entire freedom ; which, at the same time that it accomplishes the desired end, inures them to habits of industry, and prompts to commendable economy.

An objection to emancipation and colonization has been stated upon a supposition that it would introduce a mixture of blood ; but let the experience of many ages be consulted, and it will appear that this plea has very little weight in it. Mulattoes are generally born of black females, who being held under the absolute authority of their masters, owners, or overseers, are compelled to submit to their lusts, in violation of their chastity, without daring to resist or complain ; and the law which is designed for the protection of innocence and redress of wrongs, affords *them* neither security nor remedy : the offspring, partaking of the colour of each, designates this debasing sinful conduct.

Some of high rank, professing great delicacy, treat the idea of such connection with abhorrence ; but it is remarked they have been first in the transgression. It is rare to see black men with white wives, and when such instances occur, those men are generally of the lowest class, and despised by their own people ; for, Divine Providence, as if in order to perpetuate the distinction of colour, has not only placed those different nations at great distances from each other, but a natural aversion and disgust seems to be implanted in the breast of each. Captain Philip Beavor, in his African me-



moranda, relates, that one of the white women of the company of adventurers to the island of Bula-ma, being taken captive by the natives, no violation of her chastity was offered, owing, probably, to the extreme antipathy they have to a white skin, which they fully evidenced on several occasions. I have not the least doubt, the blacks have as full conviction that it is as great an evil for them to blend their colour with the whites, as we believe it is to mix with them.

When colonized, enjoying liberty and the rights of citizenship, the possession of property and attachment to domestic happiness, would no doubt be greatly enhanced; the change of situation would inspire them with more exalted sentiments of virtue and honour than has hitherto appeared in their degraded state; and I believe that instead of promoting those unnatural connexions, it would be in a good degree effectual to preserve the distinctions of nation and colour.

Havenot the General Legislature a right to instruct a committee to assign a tract within some part of the western wilderness (where there are millions of acres likely to continue many ages unoccupied) for the colonization of those who are already free, and disposed to remove thither? And if from one to two hundred acres were set off to each family, according to their number and strength, it would be an inducement to others, as they became free, to repair to the colony; and no doubt many persons of humanity, who continue to hold slaves, would be

willing to liberate them on condition of their so removing: indeed, I believe, there are numbers who would gladly embrace the opportunity, from a consciousness that they have no inherent right in them; who probably find that the profits arising from their labour are not adequate to the expense of feeding and clothing them in a reputable manner, or how could they suffer them, both male and female, to go without clothing at the age of ten or twelve years? To prevent their own children being nursed and educated in habits of tyranny, might prove an inducement to others. And some who may not at first see their way clear to follow the example, might do so at a future period. Thus an object of the greatest magnitude that perhaps has ever agitated the councils of any government, would be gradually accomplished within our own territory, and I believe that equity and impartial liberty being adhered to, and a friendly intercourse with them maintained, Divine Providence would with a propitious eye regard those measures, cause mutual advantages to spring therefrom, and make each class a blessing to the other. This dreadful evil would then be exterminated, the land and the inhabitants thereof be delivered from the bondage under which it groans, and the nation enjoy that sabbath which is prepared for all those who do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God.

## APPENDIX.

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### A.

THE Constitution of the United States is the fundamental law, the principles of which, ought to pervade the whole system of legal operation.

The leading features of this Constitution are well expressed in the Declaration of Congress, July 4th, 1774. "We hold these truths self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." In the Constitutions of most of the states are similar paragraphs.

New Hampshire.... "All men are born equally free and independant, and have certain natural, essential and inherent rights, among which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty and of seeking and obtaining happiness.

Vermont.... "Whereas, all government ought to be instituted and supported for the security and protection of the community as such, and to enable the individuals who compose it, to enjoy their natural rights and the other blessings, which the Author of our existence has bestowed upon man. All men are born equally free and independent and have certain natural inherent and unalienable rights, amongst which are the enjoying and defending life and liberty; acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety; therefore, no male person born in this country or brought from over sea, ought to be holden by law to serve any person as a servant, slave, or apprentice, after he arrives to the age of twenty-one years; nor female in like manner, after she arrives to the age of eighteen years, unless they are bound by their own consent, after they arrive to such an age, &c."

Massachusetts....“ All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights, among which may be reckoned, the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties, that of acquiring and possessing and protecting property ; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.”

Pennsylvania, Article the 9th....“ That the general, great and essential principles of liberty in a free government, may be recognized and unalterably established, We declare, that all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent and indefeasible rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, and of pursuing their own happiness.

Delaware and Maryland....“ All government of right originates from the people : it is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole.”

North Carolina....“ All political power is vested in, and derived from the people only.”

South Carolina, Article the 9th....“ All power is originally vested in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority, and are instituted for their peace, safety, and happiness.”

Georgia....“ All persons shall be entitled to the benefit of the writ of Habeas Corpus.” (Note) “ Every person held in slavery upon a writ of Habeas Corpus, ought to be discharged according to the Constitution of the United States.”

Tennessee....The same as South Carolina, and further adds, “ that the doctrine of non-resistance against an arbitrary power and oppression, is absurd, slavish, and destructive to the good and happiness of mankind.” The instructions of a committee to the Convention of Virginia, in framing their Constitution, in the 7th paragraph say, “ that no part of man’s property can be taken from him or applied to public use without his consent, or that of his legal representatives ; nor are the people bound by any laws but such as they have in like manner assented to for their common good.” The negroes are people, and their right is in themselves.

Seventeenth paragraph....“ No free government, or the blessing of liberty, can be preserved to any people but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles.”

*Address of Congress to the Inhabitants of the Colonies.*

“In every case of opposition by a people to their rulers, or of one state to another, duty to Almighty God, the Creator of all, requires, that a true and impartial judgment be formed of the measures leading to such opposition; and of the causes by which it has been provoked, or can in any degree be justified, that neither affection on the one hand, nor resentment on the other, being permitted to give a wrong bias to reason, it may be enabled to take a dispassionate view of all circumstances, and to settle the public conduct on the solid foundations of wisdom and justice. From counsels thus tempered arise the purest hopes of the divine favour, the firmest encouragement to the parties engaged, and the strongest recommendations of their cause to the rest of mankind, &c.”

*Address to the Inhabitants of Canada, May 29, 1775.*

“When hardy attempts are made to deprive men of rights bestowed by the Almighty, when avenues are cut through the most solemn compacts for the admission of despotism.”

*Address to the People of England, July 8, 1775.*

“Britains can never become the instruments of oppression till they lose the spirit of freedom.”

*Address to Ireland, July 28, 1775.*

“Compelled to behold thousands of our countrymen imprisoned, and men, women, and children involved in promiscuous and unremitted misery, when we find all faith at an end, and sacred treaties turned into tricks of state; when we perceive our friends and kinsmen massacred, our habitations plundered, our houses in flames.”

*Declaration July 6, 1775, of the Causes and Necessity of taking up Arms.*

“If it were possible for men who exercise their reason to believe, that the Divine Author of our existence intended a part of the human race to hold an absolute property in, and unbounded power over others, marked out by infinite goodness and wisdom as the objects of a legal domination, never rightfully resistable, however severe and oppressive; the inhabitants of these colonies might at least require from the Parliament of Great Britain, some

evidence that this dreadful authority over them has been granted to that body.\*

“ But a reverence for our great Creator, principles of humanity and the dictates of common sense must convince all those who reflect upon the subject, that government was instituted to promote the welfare of mankind, and ought to be administered for the attainment of that end.”

Gracious goodness, how solemn ! And is it possible the rulers of the people should be so forgetful of what is contained in this Declaration ? How applicable to the situation of the African race, that are in a much more deplorable situation ! O ye men in power, look back to the language of your predecessors in the days of distress ! If it was not thought possible for men who exercised their reason to believe that the Divine Author of man's existence intended part of the human race to hold an absolute property in, and unbounded power over others, how can you reconcile it in the present day ? Was the treatment of the Britons so severe and oppressive towards the inhabitants of these colonies ? Reverence for our great Creator, principles of humanity, and the dictates of common sense, must convince all those who reflect upon the subject, that government was instituted to promote the welfare of mankind, and ought to be administered for the attainment of that end. Then let it be administered on behalf of those captives who are groaning in sore bondage. Most assuredly those degraded sons of Africa are mankind, and have as just a right to look up to you for redress of grievances as you had to look up to the Parliament of Great Britain.

*And in the Declaration of Independence is inserted respecting the King as follows :*

“ He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy of the head of a civilized nation. He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us.”

\* So may the Africans say.

## B.

*“ To the President, Senate, and House of Representatives.*

*“ The Petition of the People of Colour, free men, within the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia, humbly sheweth,*

*“ That, thankful to God, our Creator, and to the Government under which we live, for the blessings and benefits granted to us in the enjoyment of our natural right to liberty, and the protection of our persons and property, from the oppression and violence which so great a number of like colour and national descent are subject to, we feel ourselves bound, from a sense of these blessings, to continue in our respective allotments, and to lead honest and peaceable lives, rendering due submission unto the laws, and exciting and encouraging each other thereto, agreeable to the uniform advice of our friends, of every denomination; yet while we feel impressed with grateful sensations for the Providential favour we ourselves enjoy, we cannot be insensible of the condition of our afflicted brethren, suffering under various circumstances, in different parts of these states; but deeply sympathizing with them, are incited by a sense of social duty, and humbly conceive ourselves authorized to address and petition you on their behalf, believing them to be objects of your representation in your public councils, in common with ourselves and every other class of citizens within the jurisdiction of the United States, according to the design of the present Constitution, formed by the General Convention, and ratified in the different states, as set forth in the preamble thereto in the following words, viz. ‘ We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, and to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity, do ordain, &c.’ We apprehend this solemn compact is violated, by a trade carried on in a clandestine manner, to the coast of Guinea, and another equally wicked, practised openly by citizens of some of the southern states, upon the waters of Maryland and Delaware; men sufficiently callous to qualify them for the brutal purpose, are employed in kidnapping those of our brethren that are free, and purchasing others of such as claim a property in them: thus, those poor helpless vic-*

tims, like droves of cattle, are seized, fettered, and hurried into places provided for this most horrid traffic, such as dark cellars and garrets, as is notorious at Northwest-fork, Chestertown, Eastown, and divers other places. After a sufficient number is obtained, they are forced on board vessels, crowded under hatches, without the least commiseration, left to deplore the sad separation of the dearest ties in nature, husband from wife, and parents from children; thus packed together, they are transported to Georgia and other places, and there inhumanly exposed to sale. Can any commerce, trade, or transaction, so detestably shock the feeling of man, or degrade the dignity of his nature equal to this? And how increasingly is the evil aggravated, when practised in a land high in profession of the benign doctrines of our Blessed Lord, who taught his followers to do unto others as they would they should do unto them. Your petitioners desire not to enlarge, though volumes might be filled with the sufferings of this grossly abused part of the human species, seven hundred thousand of whom, it is said, are now in unconditional bondage in these states: but conscious of the rectitude of our motives in a concern so nearly affecting us, and so effectually interesting to the welfare of this country, we cannot but address you as guardians of our rights, and patrons of equal and national liberties, hoping you will view the subject in an impartial, unprejudiced light. We do not ask for an immediate emancipation of all, knowing that the degraded state of many, and their want of education, would greatly disqualify for such a change; yet, humbly desire you may exert every means in your power to undo the heavy burdens, and prepare the way for the oppressed to go free, that every yoke may be broken. The law not long since enacted by Congress, called the Fugitive Bill, is in its execution found to be attended with circumstances peculiarly hard and distressing; for many of our afflicted brethren, in order to avoid the barbarities wantonly exercised upon them, or through fear of being carried off by those men-stealers, being forced to seek refuge by flight, they are then, by armed men, under colour of this law, cruelly treated, or brought back in chains to those that have no claim upon them. In the Constitution and the Fugitive Bill, no mention is made of black people, or slaves; therefore, if the Bill of Rights, or the Declaration of Congress are of any validity, we beseech, that as we are men, we may be admitted to par-



take of the liberties and unalienable rights therein held forth; firmly believing that the extending of justice and equity to all classes, would be a means of drawing down the blessing of Heaven upon this land, for the peace and prosperity of which, and the real happiness of every member of the community, we fervently pray. Philadelphia, 30th of December, 1799." Absalom Jones and others, 73 subscribers.

*The following letter from James Forten, as it is known to be genuine, and taken from the author's own handwriting, may properly follow, and serve to shew he is not only a man of talents, but of feeling and gratitude.*

" SIR,

" WHEN the hand of sorrow presses heavy upon us, and the generality of mankind turn unpitiful from our complaints, if one appears, and feels for, and commiserates our situation, endeavours all in his power to alleviate our condition, our bosoms swell with gratitude, and our tongues instinctively pronounce our thanks for the obligation. We, therefore, sir, Africans and descendants of that unhappy race, respectfully beg leave to thank you for the philanthropic zeal with which you defended our cause when it was brought before the General Government, by which only we can expect to be delivered from our deplorable state. We interested ourselves in the business, because we knew not but ere long we might be reduced to slavery: it might have been said that we viewed the subject through a perverted medium, if you, sir, had not adopted and nobly supported those sentiments which gave rise to our Petition. Though our faces are black, yet we are men; and though many among us cannot write, yet we all have the feelings and passions of men, and are as anxious to enjoy the birth-right of the human race as those who from our ignorance draw an argument against our Petition; when that Petition has in view the diffusion of knowledge among the African race, by unfettering their thoughts, and giving full scope to the energy of their minds. While some, sir, consider us as much property, as an house, or a ship, and would seem to insinuate, that it is as lawful to hew down the one as to dismantle the other, you, sir, more humane, consider us part of the human race. And were we to go generally

into the subject, would say, that by principles of natural law our thralldom is unjust. Judge what must be our feelings, to find ourselves treated as a species of property, and levelled with the brute creation; and think how anxious we must be to raise ourselves from this degraded state. Unprejudiced persons who read the documents in our possession, will acknowledge we are miserable; and humane people will wish our situation alleviated. Just people will attempt the task, and powerful people ought to carry it into execution. Seven hundred thousand of the human race were concerned in our Petition; their thanks, their gratitude to you, they now express....their prayers for you will mount to heaven; for God knows they are wretched, and will hear their complaints. A deep gloom envelopes us; but we derive some comfort from the thought that we are not quite destitute of friends; that there is one who will use all his endeavours to free the slave from captivity, at least render his state more sufferable, and preserve the free black in the full enjoyment of his rights. This address cannot increase the satisfaction you must derive from your laudable exertions in the cause of suffering humanity, but it serves to shew the gratitude and respect of those whose cause you espoused.

“JAMES FORTEN.

“To the Honourable George Thatcher, }  
Member of Congress.” }

C.

*Certificate of Emancipation.*

I, CALEB TRUEBLOOD, of the county of Pasquotank, in the province of North Carolina, from mature deliberate consideration, and the conviction of my own mind, being fully persuaded that freedom is the natural right of all mankind, and that no law moral or divine, has given me a right to, or property in, the persons of my fellow-creatures; and being desirous to fulfil the injunction of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by doing to others as I would be done by; do therefore declare, that having under my care a negro man named Moses, aged about twenty-three years, I do, for myself, my heirs,

executors, and administrators, hereby release unto him the said Moses, all my right, interest, and claim, or pretension of claim whatsoever, as to his person, or to any estate he may hereafter acquire, without any interruption from me, or any person claiming for, by, from, or under me. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this fourth day of the eleventh month, in the year of our Lord one thousand, seven hundred, and seventy-six.

CALEB TRUEBLOOD. (Seal)

Sealed and delivered } JOSEPH HENLEY,  
in the presence of } ZACHARIAH NIXON.

True Copy, by

ZACHARIAH NIXON.

*Advertisement.*

TEN SILVER DOLLARS REWARD

WILL be paid for apprehending and delivering to me, my negro man, named Moses, who, after being detected of some villainy, ran away this morning about four o'clock; or, I will give five times the sum to any person that will make due proof of his being killed, and never ask a question to know by whom it was done.

He is a likely, black, sensible fellow, about five feet, eight or nine inches high; well set; large legs (though well made) of a smiling countenance; and by trade a shoemaker. He formerly belonged to Caleb Trueblood, of Pasquotank county; his relations is in the neighbourhood of Newbegun-creek, and his father belongs to Col. Everigin, where it is likely he will go.

W. SKINNER.

Perqs. County, Oct. 29, 1785.

## D.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled.*

The Memorial and Address of the People called Quakers, from their Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia by Adjournments, from the 25th of the 9th month, to the 29th of the same, inclusive, 1797, respectfully sheweth,

THAT being convened at this our annual solemnity, for the promotion of the cause of truth and righteousness, we have been favoured to experience religious weight to attend our minds, and an anxious desire to follow after those things that make for peace. Among other investigations, the oppressed state of our brethren of the African race, has been brought into view, and particularly the circumstance of one hundred and forty-four in North Carolina, and many others whose cases have not so fully come to our knowledge, who were set free by members of our religious society, and again reduced into cruel bondage, under the authority of existing or retrospective laws. Husbands and wives, and children, separated one from another, which we apprehend to be an abominable tragedy, and with other acts of a similar nature practised in other states, has a tendency to bring down the judgments of a righteous God upon our land. This city and neighbourhood, and some other parts, have been visited with an awful calamity, which ought to excite an inquiry into the cause, and endeavour to do away those things which occasion the heavy cloud that hangs over us, the inhabitants. It is easy with the Almighty to bring down the loftiness of men by diversified judgments, and to make them hear the rod, and him that hath appointed it. We wish to revive in your view the solemn engagements of Congress, made in the year 1774, as follows:

“ And therefore we do for ourselves, and the inhabitants of the several colonies whom we represent, firmly agree and associate, under the sacred ties of virtue, honour, and love of our country, as follows:

“ Second Article.... We will neither import nor purchase any slaves imported after the first day of December next; after which time we will wholly discontinue the Slave-trade; and will neither be concerned in it ourselves,

nor will we hire out our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures to those who are concerned in it."

" Eighth Article....And will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kind of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments." This was a solemn league and covenant made with the Almighty in an hour of distress, and he is now calling upon you to perform and fulfil it. But how has this solemn covenant been contravened by the wrongs and cruelties practised upon the poor African race !....the increase of dissipation and luxury, the countenancing and encouragement given to play-houses and other vain amusements, and how grossly is the Almighty affronted, on the day of the celebration of independence ! What rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, to the great grief of the sober inhabitants, and the disgrace of our national character. National evils produce national judgments. We therefore pray, the Governor of the Universe may enlighten your understandings, and influence your minds, so as to engage you to use every exertion in your power, to have these things redressed. With sincere desires for your happiness here and hereafter, and that when you come to close this life, you may individually be able to appeal as a ruler did formerly...." Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee, in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight;" we remain your friends and fellow-citizens.

Signed in and on behalf of said meeting, by

JONATHAN EVANS,  
Clerk to the Meeting this Year.

*From the Committee of the Yearly Meeting to the Committee of Congress, to whom was referred the Memorial of the people called Quakers.*

IN the latter part of the year 1776, several of the people called Quakers residing in the counties of Perquimons and Pasquotank, in the state of North Carolina,

liberated their negroes, as it was then clear there was no existing law to prevent their so doing; for the law of 1741 could not at that time be carried into effect, and they were suffered to remain free, until a law passed in the spring of 1777, under which they were taken up and sold, contrary to the Bill of Rights, recognized in the Constitution of that state, as a part thereof, and to which it was annexed.

In the spring of 1777, when the General Assembly met for the first time, a law was enacted to prevent slaves from being emancipated, except for meritorious services, &c. to be judged of by the County Courts, or the General Assembly, and ordering, that if any should be manumitted in any other way, they be taken up, and the county courts within whose jurisdictions they are apprehended, should order them to be sold. Under this law, the county courts of Perquimons and Pasquotank in the year 1777, ordered a large number of persons to be sold, who were free at the time the law was made. In the year 1778, several of those cases were by certiorari brought before the superior court for the district of Edenton, where the decisions of the county courts were reversed, the superior court declaring, that said county courts, in such their proceedings, have exceeded their jurisdiction, violated the rights of the subject, and acted in direct opposition to the Bill of Rights of this state, considered justly as part of the Constitution thereof, by giving to a law not intended to affect this case, a retrospective operation, thereby to deprive free men of this state of their liberty, contrary to the laws of the land. In consequence of this decree several of the negroes were again set at liberty; but the next General Assembly, early in 1779, passed a law wherein they mention that doubts have arisen, whether the purchasers of such slaves have a good and legal title thereto, and confirm the same, under which they were again taken up by the purchaser, and reduced to slavery.\* Being much affected with this enormity, we believed it right to spread it before you: we wish not to give unnecessary trouble, but being persuaded that righteousness exalts a nation, and promotes the peace and happiness of the people, it is the fervent concern of our minds that it may more and more prevail. And having discharged our duty in this matter, at this time,

\* A flagrant violation of both law and conscience.

we leave the subject with you, and the event to Him who has the hearts of all men in his hands; and are respectfully your friends,

Signed on behalf of the Committee of our Yearly Meeting,

JOHN PARRISH,  
NICHOLAS WALN,  
THOMAS MORRIS,  
WARNER MIFFLIN,  
JONATHAN EVANS,  
THOMAS STEWARDSON.

Philadelphia, 22d of First month, 1798.

*Perquimons County, July Term, at Hartford, A. D. 1777.*

THESE may certify, that it was then and there ordered, that the sheriff of the county, to-morrow morning, at ten o'clock, expose to sale, to the highest bidder, for ready money, at the Court-house door, the several negroes taken up as free, and in his custody, agreeable to law.

Test. WILLIAM SKINNER, Clerk.

A true Copy, 25th August, 1791.

Test. J. HARVEY, Clerk.

*Pasquotank County, September Court, &c. &c. 1777.*

Present, the Worshipful Thomas Boyd, Timothy Hickson, John Paclin, Edmund Chancy, Joseph Reading, and Thomas Rees, Esquires, Justices.

IT was then and there ordered, that Thomas Reading, Esq. take the free negroes taken up under an act to prevent domestic insurrections and other purposes, and expose the same to the best bidder, at public vendue, for ready money, and be accountable for the same, agreeable to the aforesaid act, and make return to this, or the next succeeding court, of his proceedings.

ENOCH REESE, C. C.

A Copy.

*An Account of the Trial of several Negroes who had been manumitted by Friends, subsequent to an Act of General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, passed at Newbern, 1796.*

AT a County Court held at Hartford, in Perquimons, North Carolina, Jesse Eason, George Whidbee, Christopher Wright, Jesse Perry, and Jethro Ballard, active justices on the bench. After a considerable time being spent, Jasper Charlton, James Iredell, and Samuel Johnson, attornies at law, employed by the blacks, evidently made it appear, agreeably to the Constitution of that state, the Bill of Rights, &c. that a retrospective law could have no effect on the present occasion; notwithstanding the court gave judgment. Christopher White, Jesse Perry, and Jethro Ballard, were for the sale, and Jesse Eason and George Whidbee against it.

*State of North Carolina.*

AT a Superior Court of Law, begun and held at the Court-house in Edenton, for the District of Edenton, the First Day of May, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand, Seven Hundred, and Seventy-eight, before the Honourable Samuel Ashe, Samuel Spence, and James Iredell, Esquires, Justices.

ON motion of William Hooper, Esquire, attorney at law, in behalf of the following negroes, viz. Glasgow, Tom, Susanna, Jack, Cudjoe, Patience, Hannah, Silla, James, Ned, Langa, Phebe, Jacob, Will, Sibb, Cuff, Rose, Hannah, Peter, Rose, Dick, Jane, Richard, Jane, Pompey, David, Zilpha, Violet, Fanny, Dick, Abraham, Judy, Rose, Hannah, David, Charles, Toby, Nero, Priscilla, Rose, Judith, Jane, Samuel, Hagar, Ann, Sarah, on a suggestion that the said persons, though free subjects of the state, were sold and enslaved by order of the county courts of Perquimons and Pasquotank, in express violation of the Constitution of this state, contrary to natural justice; and that there are manifest errors and irregularities in the said proceedings....ordered, that a certiorari issue, unless sufficient cause to the contrary be shewn, within the three first days of the next term. After going through the regularity of the court, as the law directs, the above negroes were declared free. Given under my hand, at Edenton, the 14th day of October, Anno Domini 1796.

SPRUCE MACY, J. S. C. D. E.



*A List of Emancipated Blacks, Taken up and Sold, by order of the County Courts of Pasquotank, Perquimons, and Chowan, in consequence of several Acts of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, since the passing the first Act, in 1777.*

<i>Blacks.</i>	<i>By whom Emancipated.</i>	<i>Blacks.</i>	<i>By whom Emancipated.</i>
David,*	William Albertson.	David,	} Robert Newby.
Abraham,†	Benjamin and Chalkley Alberson.	Peggy, Priscilla,	
Jane,	William Albertson.	Jenny,	
Tom,	} John Anderson.	Jem,	} Mark Newby.
Jacob,		Zango,	
Jem,		Ned,	
Harry,		Phebe,	} Mary Nixon.
Cæsar,	Elihu Albertson.	Sam,	
Jupiter	} Jeremiah Cannon.	Ann,	} Zachariah Nixon.
Dublin,		Hagar,	
Cuffee,	} Samuel Charles.	Francis,	} Thomas Nixon.
Candace,		Charity,	
Jack,	Isaac Elliott.	Francis,	
Pleasant & 3 Children,‡	James Elliott and Wife.	Sarah,	
Tom,	William Griffin.	Richard,	} Nicholas Nixon.
Mingo,	} John Haskitt.	Pompey,	
Juda,		Dill and Child,	} Thomas Newby, of Pasquotank.
Rose,	Joseph Jones.	Jenny,	
Sarah,	Josiah Jourden.	Rose,	} Christo. Nicholson.
Dick,	Isaac Lamb.	Jonas,	
Candace,	G. and S. Metcalf.	Bosar,	} Charles Overman.
Anna§ and Child,	Samuel Moore.	Job,	
David,	Charles Morgan.	Hagar,**	} Matthew Prichard.
Esther and Child,	} Aaron Morris.	Toby,	
Rebekah & Child,		Tamor and Child,	} Henry Palin.
Joab,		Hagar.	
Penny,	Aaron Morris,	Fanny,	} William Robinson.
Ben,	Zachariah Newby.	Job,	
Sam,	Thomas Newby, of Pasquotank.	Dick,	} Samuel Smith.
Hannah,	Keziah Nixon.	Patience,	
Glasgow,	} Thomas Newby, of Pasquotank.	Dick,	} John Smith.
Jack,		Lemuel,	
Cudjoe,		Frank,	
Tom and Wife,¶		Ruth and Child,	
Susanna,		Dorcas,	} Jesse Symons.
Patience,		Esther,	
Hannah,		Ephraim,	} Elizabeth Simons.
Priscilla,		Hagar,	
		Jenny and Child,	} William Townsend.

\* Parted from his wife and children. † Carried to South Carolina from his wife and three children. ‡ Carried to the back country. § Mother was manumitted. || Glasgow and Jack carried a very considerable distance from their wives and children. ¶ Tom and wife sold from their children. \*\* Hagar carried to South Carolina from her husband and children-

<i>Blacks.</i>	<i>By whom Emancipated.</i>	<i>Blacks.</i>	<i>By whom Emancipated.</i>
Aaron,	Joseph Thornton.	Lydia,	} William White.
Juda	John Trueblood.	Peter,	
Samson,	} Josiah Trueblood.	Robin,	
Nero,		Patience,	} Margaret White.
Moses,	} Caleb Trueblood.	Cancer,	
Charles,		Ned,	} Josiah White.
Benjamin,		Violet,	
Sawney,	Aaron Trueblood.	Fanny,	
Jacob,	} Benjamin White.	Quia,	} Benjamin Winslow.
William,		Rebekah,	
Sibba,		Jane,	} Matthew White.
Hagar,		Rose,	
Cuffee,	} Thomas White.	Robin,	} Jacob Wilson.
Hannah,		Dinah,	
Rose,		Dick,	} Lydia White,
Jane,		Judah,	
Ruth,	} Caleb White.	Dick,	Rachel Williams.
Candace,		Doll,	Caleb Winslow.
Luke,		Nancy,	Jacob Winslow.
Zilpha,		Rose,	Joshua White.
Nancy,	} Caleb White.	Dinah,	George Walton.
Priscilla,		Jenny and	} Matthew White.
Mingo,		Child,	

Thus it appears, one hundred and thirty-four are gone into captivity.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled, the Petition and Representation of the undernamed Free Men, respectfully sheweth,*

THAT being of African descent, late inhabitants and natives of North Carolina, to you only, under God, can we apply, with any hope of effect, for redress of our grievances, having been compelled to leave the state wherein we had a right of residence as free men, liberated under the hand and seal of humane and conscientious masters; the validity of which act of justice, in restoring us to our natural right of freedom, was confirmed by judgment of the superior court of North Carolina, wherein it was brought to trial; yet not long after this decision, a law of that state was enacted, under which men of cruel dispositions and void of just principle, received countenance and authority, in violently seizing, imprisoning, and selling into slavery, such as had been so emancipated; whereby we were reduced to the necessity of separating from some of our nearest and most tender connections, and of seeking refuge in such parts of the Union where more regard is paid to the public declaration in favour of liberty, and the common rights of men; several

hundreds under our circumstance having in consequence of the said law been hunted day and night, like beasts of the forest, by armed men, with dogs, and made a prey of, as free and lawful plunder. Among others thus exposed, I, Jupiter Nicholson, of Perquimons county, North Carolina, after being set free by my master, Thomas Nicholson, and having been about two years employed as a seaman in the service of Zachariah Nixon, on coming on shore, was pursued by men, with dogs and arms, but was favoured to escape by night to Virginia, with my wife, who was manumitted by Gabriel Cosand, where I resided about four years, in the town of Portsmouth, chiefly employed in sawing boards and scantling. From thence I removed with my wife to Philadelphia, where I have been employed, at times, by water, working along shore, or sawing of wood. I left behind me a father and mother, who were manumitted by Thomas Nicholson and Zachariah Nixon. They have since been taken up, with a beloved brother, and sold into cruel bondage.

I, Jacob Nicholson, of North Carolina, being set free by my master, Joseph Nicholson, but continuing to live with him, till being pursued day and night, I was obliged to leave my abode, sleep in the woods and stacks in the fields, &c. to escape the hands of violent men, who, induced by the profit offered them by law, followed this course as a business....at length, by night, I made my escape, leaving a mother, one child, and two brothers, to see whom I dare not return.

I, Job Albert, manumitted by Benjamin Albertson, who was my careful guardian, to protect me from being afterward taken and sold, provided me with a house to accommodate me and my wife, who was liberated by William Robertson; but we were night and day hunted by men, armed with guns, swords, and pistols, accompanied with mastiff dogs, from whose violence being one night apprehensive of immediate danger, I left my dwelling locked and barred, and fastened with a chain, lying at some distance from it, while my wife was by her kind master locked up under his roof. I heard them breaking into my house, where, not finding their prey, they got but a small booty, a handkerchief of about a dollar value, and some provisions; but not long after, I was discovered and seized by Alexander Stafford, William Stafford, and Thomas Creesay, who were armed with guns and clubs. After binding me with my hands behind me, and

a rope round my arms and body, they took me about four miles, to Hartford prison, where I lay four weeks, suffering much from want of provisions; from thence, by the assistance of a fellow-prisoner (a white man) I made my escape, and for three dollars was conveyed with my wife, by a humane person, in a covered waggon, by night, to Virginia; where, in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth, I continued unmolested about four years, being chiefly engaged in sawing boards and plank. On being advised to move northward, I came with my wife to Philadelphia, where I have laboured for a livelihood for upwards of two years, in summer mostly along shore in vessels and stores, and sawing wood in winter. My mother was set free by Phineas Nixon, my sister by John Trueblood, and both taken up and sold into slavery; myself deprived of the consolation of seeing them, without being exposed to the like grievous oppression.

I, Thomas Prichard was set free by my master, Thomas Prichard, who furnished me with land to raise provisions for my use, where I built myself a house, cleared a sufficient spot of wood-land to produce ten barrels of corn, and the second year about fifteen; the third, had as much planted as I supposed would have produced thirty barrels. This I was obliged to leave about one month before it was fit to gather, being threatened by Holland Lockwood, who married my said master's widow, that if I would not come and serve him, he would apprehend me, and send me to the West-Indies: Enoch Ralf also threatened to send me to jail, and sell me for the good of the country. Being thus in jeopardy, I left my little farm, with my small stock and utensils, and my corn standing, and escaped by night into Virginia; where, shipping myself for Boston, I was through distress of weather landed in New-York, where I served as a waiter seven months; but my mind being distressed on account of the situation of my wife and children, I returned to Norfolk, in Virginia, with a hope of at least seeing them, if I could not obtain their freedom; but finding I was advertised in the newspapers, twenty dollars the reward for apprehending me, my dangerous situation obliged me to leave Virginia. Disappointed of seeing my wife and children, I came to Philadelphia, where I resided in the employment of a waiter, upwards of two years. In addition to the hardship of our own case, as above set forth, we believe ourselves warranted on the present occasion, in offering to your consideration the singular case of a

fellow-black now confined in the jail of this city, under the sanction of the act of General Government, called the Fugitive Law ; as it appears to us a flagrant proof how far human beings, merely on account of colour and complexion, are, through prevailing prejudices, outlawed, and excluded from common justice and common humanity, by the operations of such partial laws in support of habits and customs cruelly oppressive. This man has this many years past been manumitted by his master in North Carolina, was under the authority of the afore-mentioned law of that state, sold again into slavery ; and after having served his purchaser upwards of six years, made his escape to Philadelphia, where he has resided eleven years, having a wife and four children ; and by an agent of the Carolina claimer, has been lately apprehended and committed to prison. His said claimer, soon after the man's escaping from him, having advertised him, offering a reward of ten silver dollars to any person that would bring him back, or five times that sum to any person that would produce due proof of his being killed, and no questions asked by whom. We beseech your impartial attention to our hard condition, not only with respect to our personal sufferings as free men, but as a class of that poor people, who, distinguished by colour, are therefore with a degraded partiality considered by many, even of those in eminent stations, as unentitled to that public justice and protection which is the great object of government. We indulge not a hope, nor presume to ask for the interposition of your honourable body beyond the extent of your Constitutional power or influence, yet we are willing to believe your serious, disinterested, and candid consideration of the premises under the benign impression of equity and mercy, producing upright exertions of what is in your power, may not be without some salutary effect, both for our relief as a people, and toward the removal of obstructions to public order and well-being. If, notwithstanding all that has been publicly avowed as essential principles respecting the extent of human right to freedom, notwithstanding we have had that right restored to us so far as was in the power of those by whom we were held as slaves, we cannot claim the privilege of representation in your councils, yet, we trust, we may address you as fellow-men, who, under God, the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, are entrusted with the distribution of justice, for the terror of evil-doers, and the encouragement and protection of the innocent. Not doubting that you are men

of liberal minds, susceptible of benevolent feelings, and clear conceptions of rectitude, to catholic extent, who can admit that black people, servile as their condition generally is throughout this continent, have natural affections, social and domestic attachments and sensibilities, and that therefore we may hope for a share in your sympathetic attention. While we represent that the unconstitutional bondage in which multitudes of our fellows in complexion are held, is to us a subject sorrowfully affecting, for we cannot conceive their condition (more especially those who have been emancipated, and tasted the sweets of liberty, and again reduced to slavery, by kidnappers and men-stealers) to be less afflicting or deplorable than the situation of citizens of the United States captivated and enslaved through the unrighteous policy prevalent in Algiers....we are far from considering all those who retain slaves as wilful oppressors; being well assured that numbers in the state from whence we are exiled, hold their slaves in bondage, not of choice; but possessing them by inheritance, feel their minds burdened under the slavish restraint of legal impediments to do that justice which they are convinced is due to fellow-rationals. May we not be allowed to consider this stretch of power, morally and politically, a governmental defect, if not a direct violation of the declared fundamental principles of the Constitution? And finally, is not some remedy for an evil of such magnitude highly worthy of deep enquiry, and unfeigned zeal of the supreme legislative body of a free and enlightened people? Submitting our cause to God, and humbly craving your best aid and influence, as you may be favoured and directed by that wisdom which is from above....wherewith, that you may be eminently dignified, and rendered more conspicuously, in the view of nations, a blessing to the people you represent, is the sincere prayer of your petitioners.

JACOB NICHOLSON,

<sup>his</sup>  
JUPITER X NICHOLSON,  
mark.

<sup>his</sup>  
JOB X ALBERT,  
mark.

<sup>his</sup>  
THOMAS X PRICHARD.  
mark.

Philadelphia, Jan. 23, 1797.

*John Nixon's Certificate.*

Philadelphia, November th 2d day, 1796.

THE African people that has escaped for their lives, and through mercy has landed safely into a free country; and of those that has through sorrow and pain of heart, we have left our father and mother, brother and sisters, parents and children, and fled to a city of refuge, and we shall shew our names as following:

Job Albertson,	Moses Hallery,
Jubiter Gipson,	Hagar Nicholson,
Jacob Nicholson,	Rose Albertson,
Thomas Pritchard,	Jane Gipson,
John White,	Hannah Morris,
Davis Morris,	Hester Jeffes,
Tobias Gipson,	Patience White,
Aaron Gipson,	Grace Newby.

This may certify, that I, John Nixon, of North Carolina, am personally acquainted with the above subscribed names, and that I never knew any thing prejudicial to their characters, whilst in their native place, North Carolina.

JOHN NIXON.

Philadelphia, 11th mo. 6th, 1796.

*Case of Ann Joice and her Descendants.*

I cannot peacefully refrain citing a striking instance of flagrant cruelty and oppression towards the African race, as follows:

*Maryland, Western Shore, General Court, May Term, 1799.*

## Petition for Freedom.

Charles Mahoney	} At the Trial of this Case, sundry bills of exception were taken.
v.	
The Rev. John Ashton,	

IT appears from the records, that a black woman, called Ann Joice, the ancestor of the petitioner, was carried by her master as a slave from the island of Barbadoes to England, and afterward brought into this country by Lord Baltimore, claiming her as a slave, between the

years 1678 and 1681, and held as such during her life. It appears that Charles Mahoney, plaintiff, obtained judgment in the General Court in favour of himself, and fifteen hundred of Ann Joice's descendants, who were then in the hands of John Ashton, two persons by the name of ——— Darnall, and Charles Carroll, of Carrolton, principally. It further appears, that these people, who had obtained their liberty at a heavy expense, by feeing of lawyers, &c. after enjoying the sweets of freedom, for several years, were hunted, taken up, and put again under the iron yoke of cruel bondage, by the Court of Appeals reversing the judgment of the General Court. Thus it appears that judgment is turned backwards. How shall these injudicial proceedings be accounted for, but by the law-makers, and executors thereof, being slaveholders, and so deeply interested in human flesh; not considering that all laws enacted contrary to the laws of God are null and void, which appears by those most learned in the law of justice and equity. See maxims cited by Granville Sharpe on this subject.

THE END.





